

Trails

Background

DNR will initiate a Trails Management Process (TMP) to identify existing trails, and assess the level of impact on resources. DNR will consult with ADFG to assess level of impact to fish, wildlife and their habitat related to recreational use. The TMP will also identify where additional trails are needed to enhance recreational user opportunities or reduce impacts to fisheries and wildlife habitat. The initial phase of this process will address trails in vegetated areas within the Lower Knik Flats and Lakes and Wetlands units. The second phase will address trails in the remaining units.

Goal

- Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities while protecting fish, wildlife and their habitats.

Management Guidelines

- Provide an inventory of trails, and provide an assessment of trail conditions. This assessment will identify existing trails that may have significant impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, particularly within waterfowl nesting areas, fish spawning and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, and nesting trumpeter swans or loons. Trails in wetland areas, or other sensitive areas will be assessed to determine if they are having an unacceptable level of impact on the wetlands. Trails impacting other state resources will also be assessed.
- Based on those assessments, existing trails determined to be negatively impacting fish, wildlife, habitat, or other state resources may be closed, re-routed, or have another use or time restriction.
- DNR will identify potential new trails (non-motorized and motorized) for development and identify existing trails consistent with this plan that can be developed to a higher standard or expanded. Trails may also be identified for reservation as public easements for specific purposes.
- Not all existing routes within the PUA will be identified as a trail. Routes resulting from single vehicle passage or infrequent use by highway and off-highway vehicles may not be identified as a trail by DNR.
- Individuals may nominate new trails and DNR may accept applications and adjudicate applications to develop new trails or to re-route, or expand existing trails. DNR will reserve easements on trails developed with an authorization.

- 1 • DNR may consider Trail Management Agreements with organizations or individuals
2 for the maintenance of trails or segments of trails.
- 3 • When sighting a new trail or re-routing an existing trail adjacent to an anadromous
4 waterbody DNR will consider the impact associated with the use of that trail on the
5 waterbody.
- 6 • All trails (new and up-graded, expanded or re-routed) or facilities within the planning
7 area should be sited and designed to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife and their
8 habitats. If impacts to these habitats cannot be avoided, they should be minimized.
- 9 • All trails and developed facilities should be sited and developed to minimize impacts
10 to anadromous waterbodies. Stream crossings should be developed generally
11 perpendicular to the stream flow.
- 12 • Within 100 feet of an anadromous waterbody, excluding the Knik River and
13 shorelands of the Knik River, trails should not be developed parallel to the ordinary
14 high watermark. See Figure 1-1, pp. 1 - 9 for a depiction of state shorelands.
- 15 • New trails proposed within or adjacent to waterfowl nesting habitat, fish spawning
16 and rearing areas, moose calving concentration areas, or swan or loon nesting areas
17 should be sited and developed to avoid impacts to these areas. If these identified
18 sensitive areas cannot be avoided, the impacts to these areas should be minimized.
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